

Record 2016 Pushes Migrant Arrivals in Italy over Half Million



Rome, February 6 (RHC)-- More than 181,000 migrants arrived in Italy by boat in 2016, an increase of almost 18 percent compared with 2015.

According to the Italian Foreign Ministry, nearly one-fifth more migrants arrived in Italy by boat last year, setting a record and bringing the three-year total to more than half a million.

In commenting on the figures, a ministry official took another swipe at the lack of help from other European Union countries to deal with the crisis.

"It was a record year for arrivals, and despite all the alarmism, Italy has held up with great dignity," Mario Morcone, the Interior Ministry official in charge Italy's immigration system, told Reuters. "And it has done so without a great deal of European solidarity."

In 2015, EU member states promised to relocate 40,000 asylum seekers from Italy to other countries over two years, but only 2,654 have so far been moved. Several states have refused to take any.

Since the beginning of 2014, more than 500,000 boat migrants have reached Italy from North Africa. Many have fled war, poverty or political oppression, and there is no sign that they will stop coming in the new year.

Almost 8,000 came in December despite unfavorable sea conditions.

<https://www.radiohc.cu/en/noticias/internacionales/120733-record-2016-pushes-migrant-arrivals-in-italy-over-half-million>



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